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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 JEDDAH 000408

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SUBJECT: MOSQUE SERMONS FOR SAUDI ARABIA JUNE 2: EASTERN
IMAM CONTINUES [MODERATED] ATTACK ON SHI'A; MECCA IMAM
PREACHES TOLERANCE, ALTHOUGH NOT TO TYRANNY; MEDINAN
ADMONISHES CONGREGATION TO FULFILL RELIGIOUS DUTIES TO
ATTAIN PARADISE

REF: JEDDAH 399

Classified By: Acting Consul General Hector Morales, for
reasons 1.4 (b) and (d).

FROM EASTERN PROVINCE: SECOND INSTALLMENT OF ANTI-SHI'A
SERMON TONED DOWN

¶1. (C) At the Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal Mosque in al-Khobar, Shaikh Mohammad al-Qahtani kept his promise of last week (reftel) and gave a second sermon condemning Shi'as as unworthy to be called Muslims and prejudiced against Sunnis. However, in the opinion of the source, the mood of this speech was quite different. Absent was the more incendiary language he employed the preceding week. Nor did he charge the Shi'a with betraying Islam or allying themselves with the West against Islam. This week he limited his accusations to hypocrisy, accusing the Shi'a of contradicting themselves in their speech and actions. He again denounced them for their hostility toward Sunnis and their theologically-based criticism of companions of the Prophet and other historically important figures in Sunni theologQ He declared that this enmity toward revered figures disqualified Shi'as from inclusion in the Muslim community. He concluded with the almost conciliatory statement that: "The Shi'ite leaders who sowed so much misunderstanding and discord have all gone. Other Muslim leaders are gone, too. Even the purest of them all--the Prophet Mohammad--is gone. Islam, though remains and shall remain so. Only God is Omnipresent."

FROM MECCA: IMAM CALLS FOR TOLERANCE AND FORGIVENESS,...

¶2. (U) In the Grand Mosque in Mecca on June 2, Shaykh Salih Bin-Abdalah Bin-Humayd delivered a cry for tolerance and forgiveness, reminding the congregation that "people have different opinions, ideas, and beliefs and that people can establish strong relations with one another only if they renounce prejudice. Tolerance and forgiveness," the imam continued, "create noble feelings in enlightened hearts, turn enemies into close friends, and spare nations the dangers of internecine fighting." Then the imam prayed "O' Muslims, this is a talk on tolerance, gentleness, good heartedness, and love for justice and mercy at a time when the nation experiences feelings of distress between the enemy's injustice, the friend's harshness, and obstacles on the way to reform, the retrieval of rights, and the unity of ranks."

He also told the listeners that tolerance "is a constructive, noble power, reflecting appreciation for others and their opinions."

...BUT TOLERANCE AND FORGIVENESS ONLY GO SO FAR

¶3. (U) Then Humayd informed the worshipers that "tolerance is stronger than revenge and enmity, does not encroach on rights, and means coexistence with enemies and friends and recognition of equality, justice and pluralism. Tolerance," the imam warned, "does not mean that we can tolerate the non-application or the wrong application of the Islamic law to people, although the rules of Islam are based on tolerance and are implemented in atmospheres of tolerance. Tolerance does not mean blasting the memory of history and ignoring usurped rights, the tyranny of the possessors of smart bombs, and the brokers of the nuclear wastes buried under the feet of weak nations who are unable to do anything. Tolerance cannot prevail while one camp tries to develop weapons of mass destruction, (yet) asks others to develop laundry powder, and may even force them to import it instead of manufacturing it. (It is) the powerful," according to the imam, "who should be asked to be tolerant because weak and defeated nations have no choice."

PRAYER FOR MUJAHIDIN IN PALESTINE AND ELSEWHERE

¶4. (U) Humayd's sermon closed with a prayer to "strengthen Islam and Muslims, humiliate atheism and atheists... protect us in our homelands and give wisdom to our imams and leaders." He also asked God to grant success to the Saudi leader and "support mujahidin in Palestine and elsewhere and to deal with the Zionist occupiers."

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FROM MEDINA: GOOD DEEDS IN LIFE ARE THE PATH TO PARADISE IN THE AFTERLIFE

¶5. (U) Speaking from the Prophet's Mosque in Medina, Imam Shaykh Ali Abd-al-Rahman al-Hudhayfi reminded Muslims that they will die soon and go either to Paradise or Hell. Good deeds, he asserted, are the way to success in life and in the hereafter. He cautioned Muslims not to be tempted by the lures of life. The best deeds he averred, "are worship and fear God, to have faith in God and to carry out religious duties." He also concluded his lesson with a prayer for God to strengthen Islam, protect the homeland and grant success to the Saudi king.
Morales